

Message Text

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46

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EUR-12 IO-10 NEAE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00

USIE-00 INRE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 SY-05 A-01 OPR-02 USSS-00

AID-05 OC-05 CCO-00 DHA-02 OMB-01 SCS-03 SCCT-01 EB-07

COME-00 TRSE-00 SCA-01 /106 W
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O R 241445Z NOV 75

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7416

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

USINT BAGHDAD

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMCONSUL STUTTGART

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

CINCUSNAVEUR LONDON UK

COMMSIXTHFLT

CTF SIX ZERO

CTF SIX ONE

CTF SIX TWO

CTG SIX ZERO PT TWO

FOSIF ROTA SPAIN

FICEURLANT NORFOLK VA

DIA WASHDC

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CIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 14552

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PINS, LE

SUBJECT: GLOOM ONCE MORE PERVASIVE

REF: BEIRUT 14496 (22 NOV 75 1211Z)

1. CLASHES REPORTEDLY CONTINUE IN LIGHT DRIZZLE AS OF 1300 HOURS LOCAL NOV 24 IN MANY PORTIONS OF BEIRUT, INCLUDING CENTRAL PLACE DES CANONS, FOLLOWING BLOODY WEEKEND. SHIYAH AND AIN EL-RUMANNEH FRONTS REPORTEDLY QUIETER MORNING OF NOV 24 THAN OVER PREVIOUS TWO NIGHTS, BUT CITY APPEARS TO BE SLIPPING ONCE MORE TOWARD GENERALIZED CIVIL STRIFE AS INCREASING NUMBERS OF ARMED MEN REPORTEDLY MAN BARRICADES BY DAY AS WELL AS NIGHT. FIGHTING HAS NOT RPT NOT REUTNED TO HOTEL AREA, BUT CLASHES, INVOLVING HEAVY WEAPONS, WERE MORE AUDIBLE IN RAS BEIRUT NIGHT NOV 23-24 THAN THEY HAD BEEN FOR LAST TWO WEEKS. SITUATION IN NORTH NOT ENTIRELY CLEAR BUT PRESS REPORTS RENEWAL OF CLASHES BETWEEN TRIPOLI AND ZGHORTA AND SHOOTINGS, KIDNAPPINGS, ETC., IN FAR-NORTH AKKAR.

2. MAIN POLITICAL EVENT OF NOV 24 APPEARS TO BE CONVENING OF NOW CONTROVERSIAL "DIALOGUE COMMITTEE" WHICH MEETING AT THIS WRITING. THERE HAS BEEN SPECULATION THAT AT LEAST SEVERAL MEMBERS, INCLUDING CHAMOUN AND POSSIBLY GEMAYEL, WOULD NOT ATTEND, BUT WE DO NOT YET HAVE READOUT RE ATTENDANCE. MOST OBSERVERS, HOWEVER, ARE SKEPTICAL THAT COMMITTEE CAN PUT DEFINITEVE END TO SKIDDING SECURITY SITUATION, ALTHOUGH UNDOUBTEDLY BEHIND-THE-SCENES CONTACTS ARE TAKING PLACE TO SUPPLEMENT DIALOGUE EFFORT. FOLLOWING SEVERAL UNOBSERVED "CEASEFIRES" OVER WEEKEND, CREDIBILITY OF HIGHER COORDINATION COMMITTEE IS WIDELY QUETIONED AND PUBLIC UTTERANCES OF PRIMIN KARAME HAVE BEEN GLOOMY IN THE EXTREME.

3. COUVE DE MURVILLE CONTINUES HIS ROUND OF APPOINTMENTS WITH PROMINENT LOCAL FIGURES AND SPECULATION ABOUNDS THAT DOWNWARD SPIRAL ASSOCIATED WITH HIS PRESENCE, BUT THIS IS FAR FROM CONFIDENTIAL

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CONFIRMED. COUVE IS HANDLING HIMSELF WELL IN PUBLIC COMMENTS, LIMITING HIS SUBSTANTIVE REMAKRS AND KNOCKING DOWN IDEA OF PARTITION (SEPTTEL). TENUOUSNESS OF NORMAL ACTIVITY WAS UNDERLINED AFTERNOON OF NOV 23 WHEN SIX MORTAR SHELLS (ALLEGEDLY FIRED FROM FURN ASH SHUBAK) LANDED ON GROUNDS OF FRENCH AMB'S RESIDENCE SHORTLY BEFORE COUVE'S SCHEDULED ARRIVAL THERE. LEBANESE SERGEANT ASSIGNED TO FRENCH EMISSARY'S ESCORT WAS INJURED BY MORTAR FRAGMENTS AND HOSPITALIZED AT NEARBY BARBIR

HOSPITAL.

4. LEBANESE ECONOMY ONCE MORE PARALYZED. NO BANKS OPEN
AND TRAFFIC, EVEN ON CORNICHE, IS LIGHT. GASOLINE SHORTAGE
HAS PROMPTED REAPPEARANCE OVER WEEKEND OF BLACK MARKETEERS.
UPSURGE OF VIOLENCE HAS NOT RPT NOT AFFECTED AIRPORT OPERA-
TIONS THUS FAR.

5. SO FAR AS WE CAN DETERMINE, ALL AMCITS REMAIN SAFE.
GODLEY

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NNN

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